

## ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A method of inducing blood vessel formation in an animal by administering to the animal a polynucleotide encoding a sphingosine kinase, or an analogue, fragment, or derivative thereof. The polynucleotide may be contained in an appropriate expression vector, such as a viral vector. The delivery of sphingosine kinase through administration of an expression vector which expresses sphingosine kinase provides for the formation of larger blood vessels containing a well defined structure that is supported by mural cells such as pericytes and smooth muscle cells.